

Blue Future Aquatic Project

Across the United States, Black and Brown youth remain dramatically underrepresented in aquatic careers while being disproportionately impacted by drowning rates, limited access to water safety training, and exclusion from the rapidly growing Blue Economy. Simultaneously, workforce shortages in lifeguarding, water safety instruction, scientific diving, and aquatic recreation are reaching crisis levels, resulting in thousands of unfilled jobs annually.

The Blue Futures Aquatic Project directly addresses this need by establishing a multi-state, employer-aligned workforce pipeline that equips Black and Latino youth participants, aged 14–23, with paid career pathways, stackable certifications, STEM training, and direct job placement into high-growth aquatic professions. By aligning community assets across Cleveland (lead market), Washington D.C., Indianapolis, Florida, and Nashville, we transform water access into economic access, creating job-ready young professionals positioned to lead the future of the Blue Economy.

Tennessee Aquatic Project (Located in Nashville TN) www.tennesseequaticproject.org

Our vision was to create a youth-based organization that would provide at-risk and inner city youth in particular, a complete approach to personal development. We would stress the educational, personal, community, occupational, ecological and human connections that compose our world and life choices. Using aquatics and travel as major incentives, we organized The Tennessee Aquatic Project and Development Group for youth ages 8-18

Chattanooga Aquatic Project (Located in Chattanooga TN) www.chataquatic.com

The mission for CAP&PD is to teach urban children how to swim and to build future stewards of the environment focusing on clean water; watersheds, lakes, rivers, oceans, land protection and air quality. Additionally, CAP seeks to fill the city's pipelines for WSI and Lifeguards employment opportunities.

Our Genetic Legacy. (Located San Diego CA) <https://www.ourgeneticlegacy.org/news>

Our Genetic Legacy (OGL) is a California-based nonprofit that uses DNA, drones, marine science, and museum science to empower young people to study and share Afro-Indigenous culture on land and beneath the sea. Through our newest program, UnderH2O Explorers, OGL trains girls ages 14–24 in ROV operations, scuba diving, coral restoration, coastal mapping, and other marine science disciplines, using hands-on fieldwork to connect cultural history with technical skill-building.

Ocean Explorers (Located Washington D.C.)

Ocean Explorers Youth Diving empowers young people ages 15–20 to become skilled scuba divers, passionate ocean stewards, and advocates for maritime heritage. Through hands-on training, coral restoration, and conservation initiatives in collaboration with C.A.R.E.S, we empower youth to take responsibility for their future and the environment—advancing this mission with each dive.

See You At The Top SYATT, (Located in Cleveland Ohio) <https://www.syattcle.org/>

Syatt was founded by Marcia Hood with a clear vision: to see Black and Brown kids on the slopes and in every outdoor space where they've been overlooked. What began with skiing has grown into a movement rooted in family, community, and possibility.

Led by Marcia and her daughters, Erika and Ebony, SYATT creates space for growth through activities like kayaking, rowing, scuba diving, and hiking. Our work centers youth, supports families, and encourages people to show up fully, mind, body, and spirit.

We stay grounded, speak up, and do the work, always with love, honesty, and a deep belief in the power of showing up for each other.

Florida Aquatic Project (FLAP) (Located in Rockledge Florida)

To empower Florida's youth through a complete aquatic pipeline—from foundational swimming and competitive excellence to professional lifeguarding and scuba certification—cultivating a diverse generation of skilled leaders and passionate ocean advocates dedicated to protecting our marine environments.